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**Chairman:** Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

**AGENDA ITEM 62**

**Question of Algeria (A/3197) (*continued*)**

1. Mr. PINEAU (France), resuming his statement, explained the French policy of pacification in Algeria. Because of the impossibility, so far, of obtaining a cease-fire with the rebels, France had had to take the military measures necessary for the maintenance of order and the protection of life and property. France could have ended the conflict quickly. Had France wanted, as some had charged, to destroy the Algerian population or to engage in the practice of genocide it would have needed less than its 400,000 men in Algeria—a few planes and some modern military equipment would have sufficed. However, France had chosen the opposite method, that of coming to grips with the rebels alone and ensuring the protection of the French Moslems who did not wish to be involved in the conflict.
2. The aims of the French policy of pacification, as defined on several occasions by the Prime Minister of France and the Minister residing in Algeria, were essentially to free the Algerians from the terror to which they were subjected, to bring closer together the French and the Moslem communities, and to increase their common trust in metropolitan France. Such action would create the concrete conditions for a political settlement.
3. Proof of France's policy of pacification was the work being done by French officers alongside the Administration throughout Algeria. He quoted, in that connexion, from directives issued by the French Government which placed upon the Army the responsibility not only of maintaining peace and order, but of carrying out hand in hand with French administrators a policy of co-operation with the Moslem population aimed at their protection, the betterment of their standard of living, education and health, and the fostering of closer individual contacts between the French and the Moslem communities. Those directives showed that pacification, and not a war of reconquest and extermination, was France's aim in Algeria.
4. The French Army had been accused of not having applied those directives and of having committed numerous excesses. He refuted those unjustified charges. The Minister residing in Algeria had ordered the troops to act humanely and to avoid reprisals; a control body as well as mixed commissions of inquiry composed of civil and military authorities had been established to prevent exactions similar to those practised on a wide scale by the rebels. Although the

excesses of the rebellion and the circumstances of the battle entailed some undue repression, it was to France's credit that it had succeeded in avoiding that as much as possible.

5. He then dealt with accusations made against France regarding alleged police brutality, the arbitrary arrest of Algerian trade unionists and the behaviour of French troops in Algeria, concerning which the rebels and their supporters had circulated fantastic stories. All the accusations had been proved to be without foundation. For instance, an investigation into the alleged mistreatment of Communists arrested in September 1956 at Oran had shown, according to the testimony of the prisoners themselves, that none had been tortured. No Algerian trade unionist had ever been arrested for his union activities. He also denied the charges of alleged crimes made in a recent memorandum filed by the Algerian National Movement. Examining separately each of the alleged occurrences listed in the memorandum, he contended that the facts had been distorted, exaggerated or invented to suit the purposes of rebel propaganda. He noted that the rebel groups often alluded to articles in the French press, particularly in *France observateur*, a newspaper that followed the Communist line. Those articles consisted entirely of unsupported accusations without the slightest detail concerning the occurrences themselves.

6. Because he wanted to be objective, he recognized that certain abuses, unavoidable on the part of soldiers engaged in military operations, might have occurred. But in all the cases reported to the authorities, inquiries had been made and penalties imposed. A report made by the Division of Military Justice, dated 22 December 1956, had stated that seventy-four incidents had been investigated before military tribunals. He mentioned a case in which the Minister residing in Algeria had taken severe disciplinary measures against French soldiers in connexion with the killing of six Moslems and the wounding of twelve others during an inspection following the murder of several French soldiers. He would be interested to know what penalties the National Liberation Front had imposed on its men, who had murdered almost 6,000 persons in less than eighteen months.

7. Discussing the Administration's efforts to improve the internment camp system and to safeguard the health of prisoners, Mr. Pineau mentioned that large sums of money had been earmarked for food and hospital care for prisoners, who were subjected only to elementary security measures. That fact should be noted by certain critics of France, who preferred executioners to prison guards.

8. His Government was also anxious to answer the charge concerning the arrest of five rebel leaders—Messrs. Ben Bella, Khidder, Boudiaf, Lecherf, and Ait-Ahmet Hocine—under circumstances allegedly contrary to international law. Recalling the events that had led to their imprisonment, he stated that the five

rebel leaders had been conspiring abroad, and most of them had been sought by the French authorities for crimes under the ordinary law. The French military authorities therefore had a right to divert the plane that was taking the rebel leaders from Morocco to Tunis and to order it to land in Algeria, where the leaders had been arrested and later taken to France. Their arrest, in fact, had made it possible to seize important documents concerning the organization of the National Liberation Front and the foreign assistance which the rebels received.

9. The Moroccan and French Governments had agreed to submit the matter to a commission of conciliation and inquiry which would decide whether a wrong had been done to the Sherifian Transportation Company. The commission would, however, have no jurisdiction over the fate of the five rebels, four of whom had been convicted of serious offences. Mr. Ben Bella had been condemned to forced labour for life by the Assize Court of Oran for an armed attack on the Oran Post Office in 1949.

10. Discussing further the circumstances surrounding the arrest of the rebel leaders, he explained that there had never been a question of derogating from the authority of the Sultan of Morocco. While the boarding of the airplane had raised a question in international law, it was recognized that the plane was of French registry, belonged to a Sherifian company owned largely by French stockholders, and had a French crew on board. Moreover, the plane was operating under the jurisdiction of the civil aviation services of Morocco which had been reserved by the Protocol of 11 February 1956 to the authority of the French Minister of Public Works. Also, the rebel leaders bore false documents as well as arms, a violation of article 28 of the Civil and Commercial Aviation Code, which in itself would have justified the diversion of the plane from its course.

11. He felt compelled to compare the conduct of French troops with what he termed the criminal course of action followed by the terrorist bands. In the past, his Government had hesitated to publicize those actions sufficiently, because, among other reasons, it did not wish to widen the breach which some were trying to create between the French of European origin and the French of Moslem origin. Since the start of the rebellion, crimes of an abominable nature had been perpetrated in Algeria against both the civilian population and the military. The so-called Army of National Liberation had been instructed not to take prisoners, but to execute French soldiers who fell into their hands. On 18 April 1956, six French soldiers were shot near Tablat after being stripped of their arms and clothing; nineteen soldiers had been assassinated in the Palestro region. He cited other cases of such assassination and violation of universally recognized rules of war, such as attacks on military ambulances and the illegal wearing of uniforms for the commission of heinous crimes.

12. The principal victims of rebel fanaticism were the Moslems who remained loyal to France or who did not obey the rebels' orders with alacrity. There was documentary proof of the atrocities committed. The White Book published in 1956 contained photographs of numerous Moslems with their throats slashed or whose faces exhibited the marks of hideous mutilations. In an issue of *La Presse médicale* of 27 June 1956, there were pictures of Moslems with throats slashed, eyes gouged out, ears torn off or noses severed — often for no crime other than smoking and drinking in violation of the

rebels' orders. The barbarity of the rebels was established by the directives contained in their own leaflets. 13. Finally, there were crimes committed against Europeans. On 20 August 1955, 123 Europeans had been massacred. At El Halia, thirty-four Europeans, ten of whom were children, had been slaughtered and their bodies mutilated. Because those murders had been committed on the basis of the ethnic and religious groups to which the victims belonged, they were, he asserted, perfect examples of genocide.

14. More recently Communist influence had turned toward terrorism in the cities. There were bombing attacks on public and private buildings and on transportation facilities, with the consequent death or injury of scores of people. Numerous individuals of European or Moslem origin were still being threatened. For instance, Mr. Ali Chekkal, a member of the French delegation present at the meeting and a former President of the Algerian Assembly, had been sentenced to death by the rebels. Since they had declared that they were ready to execute him anywhere, especially in the United States, the French delegation had been compelled to ensure the physical protection of a representative to the United Nations.

15. To the crimes against human beings there should be added the destruction of property. In that connexion, he claimed that the following buildings had been destroyed in the period between November 1955 and May 1956: 231 schools, 89 bridges, 90 foresters' lodges, 6 medical and social centres, 259 railway depots and 271 post offices. Since May 1956, those figures had more than doubled, and statistics on the destructions would be available soon. Among other destructive acts he cited the burning down of farms and the cutting down of 91,000 trees — which for a country where drought was endemic, amounted to a crime against the Algerian population. With that rebel manner of benefiting the Algerian people, he contrasted the French method of providing care, education and building.

16. Turning to the question of foreign intervention, Mr. Pineau declared that, despite their state of mind and methods, the rebels would have accepted the peaceful solution proposed by France had they not received encouragement and substantial aid from abroad. He denounced that aid before the United Nations and recalled that a complaint on the subject (S/3689) had been lodged by his Government with the Security Council.

17. Foreign intervention took various forms. He had previously referred to the aid which the Algerian Communist Party received from the Communist International. There was no doubt that, despite the promises given, Soviet support of the Algerian rebellion was a reality. Nevertheless, it was Egypt, he affirmed, which had given the Algerian rebellion the most continuous and effective support, and the Egyptian Government had never made a secret of the role which it played.

18. The Egyptian Government's interference could be discussed under different headings. In the first place, there were propaganda activities and incitement to violence. For several years the official radio station of Cairo and that of Damascus had waged a campaign of lies and hatred against France. After quoting two examples of such radio broadcasts, Mr. Pineau charged that Egypt and the Arab States which followed its example were the instigators of the terrorist movement and that it was from Cairo that the rebellion gained impetus.

19. The training of terrorist cadres, which had been begun in 1953 under the supervision of the Egyptian Minister of Public Education, was another phase of Egyptian interference. All young Algerians entering the University of Al-Azhar in Cairo were required to take military training and induced to join the rebels; they were then sent to camps for a short training in guerrilla warfare, sabotage and the handling of explosives; next, they went to North Africa, after being provided with forged French papers. It was believed that several hundred commandos had been trained in Egyptian camps. Some commandos who had fallen prisoner had declared that they had travelled to Algeria by way of Libya, Tunisia or the former Spanish Zone of Morocco. They considered Cairo the capital of the insurrectionist movement against France. One of the main general staffs of the rebellion—that of the National Liberation Front—had its headquarters in Cairo and made use of the facilities of Radio Cairo and of the North African Section of the Egyptian Secret Service. Documents seized by the French police showed that that service had taken over the leadership of the general staff of the National Liberation Front.

20. With regard to the financing of the rebellion, he recalled that on 19 June 1954 the League of Arab States had decided to set up a fund for North Africa, which was being replenished regularly by appropriations included in the League's annual budget. The fund paid for propaganda, particularly in the United States. Mr. Nasser, President of Egypt, in a statement to *The Daily Telegraph*, had admitted furnishing money to the rebels for their arms purchases. Mr. Pineau declared that assistance on such a large scale, when used by a State to encourage subversive activities on the part of political refugees admitted to its territory, was considered inadmissible by international jurisprudence; and when it was accompanied by the issuance of false identification papers to foreigners for political purposes, it constituted outright interference in the internal affairs of a State. Such action was inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations and with the Charter obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations. By aiding subversion and revolt in the territory of another State, Egypt had violated the rules of law and had thus deprived itself of all authority to invoke those rules when it considered it to be in its interest to do so.

21. Next, Mr. Pineau took up the more serious matter of Egyptian supply of arms to the rebels, a fact confirmed through the capture by a French warship of the ship *Athos* on 16 October 1956. The ship had been carrying almost 100 tons of arms of Indian and British manufacture, including 77 mortars, 39 machine guns, 74 automatic rifles, 1,985 British-type rifles, 247 automatic pistols and over 1,000 cases of shells, hand grenades and cartridges. The owner of the vessel and six passengers who had been captured at the same time had testified in detail concerning the supply, loading and dispatch of the ship by Egyptian authorities, a matter which was thus left in no doubt. That, he claimed, was a violation of Article 2 of the Charter and an infringement of French sovereignty. In view of the facts the United Nations should condemn Egypt severely.

22. However, he did not feel that the interference of Tunisia and Morocco should be placed on the same level. Those countries had readily expressed their solidarity with the Algerian rebels and had frequently intervened in their favour. France could understand

that a certain solidarity should be asserted, but it could not accept either non-compliance with the terms of diplomatic agreements which France had signed with Tunisia and Morocco, or violation of international rules. It was most unjustified that a strong organization in Tunis should supply arms to the Algerian rebels or that Morocco should consistently back the National Liberation Front. He expressed the hope that Tunisia and Morocco would understand that, in so doing, they were not helping to restore peace in the area.

23. With regard to the intentions of his Government, he stressed that its grievances against the rebels and their supporters would not deter France from its determination to arrive at a liberal political solution of the Algerian problem. But he made it clear that the type of solution reached in the cases of Tunisia and Morocco was not possible with regard to Algeria. The proposal whereby Algeria would become an independent State within which the French population would enjoy its legitimately acquired rights did not take into account the real facts of the Algerian situation; the presence in Algeria of 1.2 million persons of European origin who had actively participated in the political and economic life of the country created a special problem.

24. In the cases of Tunisia and Morocco, the question of the protection of the status and rights of the French population was, though difficult to solve, not the same as in the case of Algeria. The French in Tunisia and Morocco had always considered that they lived in a foreign land, whereas to the non-Moslems in Algeria, the land was their own. Moreover, there had been in those two countries an established political structure, political parties, leaders and a national consciousness non-existent in Algeria. In fact, there had never been an Algerian nation, and, before the presence of the French, no State had imposed its law on Algerian territory. The so-called Kingdom of Algiers had consisted of a small strip of land around the city proper. If France were to hand over its powers to the rebels, there would arise a chaotic situation which would render life intolerable for the minority of European origin.

25. Another reason for France's determination to remain permanently in Algeria was that it could not abandon the Moslem community to the exactions of the bands of fanatics who would substitute wholesale massacre for individual assassination.

26. Independence pure and simple was not, in all cases, the only solution. An original solution was possible between France and Algeria, one that would give rise to a new community, but in order to accomplish that, peace had to be re-established. Mr. Pineau reiterated France's unconditional offer of a cease-fire and his Government's readiness to enter into direct contact with the combatants so as to arrange the general conditions for a cease-fire. He rejected the contention that France sought to obtain the unconditional surrender of the rebels; on the contrary, what France wanted was a cessation of hostilities in order to arrive at a political solution by democratic means, including the holding of elections. The freedom of those elections must be subject to rigorous supervision by both sides. France was prepared to invite observers from countries with established democratic traditions, although United Nations intervention could not be allowed. Elections would be necessary to provide all the new Algerian communes with municipal councils, elected by a single electoral college, and to enable French Moslems not only to participate in the management of municipal affairs, but to train leaders. Moreover, as required by the French Consti-

tution, elections to the legislature must be held, also on the basis of a single electoral college. The candidates thus elected to represent Algeria in the National Assembly would at the same time be the spokesmen with whom the French Government intended, without discrimination, to discuss the future régime of Algeria. In his opinion such a solution was infinitely more democratic and valid than a political discussion with the leaders of armed bands whose representative character had never been established. The order to be followed in achieving a solution, therefore, was the following: a cease fire, then elections, and then discussion.

27. He recalled that the Prime Minister of France, Mr. Guy Mollet, had, on 9 January 1957, outlined the basic principles for the solution of the Algerian question. The first was to ensure strict equality of rights on the political, economic and social levels for all inhabitants of Algeria, regardless of origin or religion. The second was to ensure the coexistence of the communities which made up Algeria, with due respect for their legitimate rights; the implementation of that principle involved territorial reorganization, and a large measure of decentralization through territorial assemblies and communes vested with local powers; representatives of both the French and the Moslem communities must be associated in these communal and territorial interests. The third was to define Algeria's individual characteristics, while maintaining the necessary links with Metropolitan France, including retention by France of a permanent power of arbitration to prevent the oppression of either community by the other. Finally, France intended to provide Algeria with continued economic aid.

28. In discussing those principles, Mr. Pineau pointed out some of the measures which the French Government had already undertaken or would undertake in the future to fulfil its programme. He analysed the French position in a wider context and pointed out that France was making every effort to promote liberty, democracy and well-being. After referring to the large-scale reforms carried out by France in other parts of Africa, he declared that Algeria was included in those plans and that the French Government, by accepting at the outset the principle of a single electoral college for future Algerian elections, had rendered untenable the position of certain States which had condemned the Franco-Algerian community by appealing to a so-called right to independence which would authorize violence and hatred and lead to anarchy.

29. The principle of the right of self-determination did not and could not imply a sanction; the problems raised by the existence of a majority and a minority were not to be solved by subjecting the minority to the majority or by separating the two into different States. Many countries had their Algerias, among them India, the Soviet Union, the Union of South Africa, Cyprus, Malaya, Singapore and Rhodesia. Canada and Lebanon, however, were examples of countries which had been able to solve the tension existing between two different communities through the harmonious operation of an original political system. In Indonesia, factors making for secession were already at work, but, he stressed, there had been no suggestion that the United Nations should meddle in that essentially domestic question.

30. The problem to solve was one of coexistence and, unless it was admitted that the world was progressing toward greater fragmentation, the solution lay in interdependence and co-operation. Nationalism was no longer a sign of progress; the best proof that nationalism had no future was to be found in the fact that almost all

countries were seeking ways of becoming integrated with larger communities. Of course the rejection of nationalism as a principle of international action must not be a "bonus" granted to a new form of economic colonialism. What was important was to promote an acceptable standard of living throughout the world which would enable men to enjoy true liberty.

31. The plan of economic assistance to the underdeveloped countries proposed by France in the United Nations (589th plenary meeting) was an answer to the need for improving the standard of living of peoples. That was the spirit which underlay the policy of France toward the territories associated with it by various juridical forms. France was prepared to create a large Franco-African whole, based on a community of cultural, economic and strategic interests, which Tunisia and Morocco were invited to join as free countries. France envisaged an even greater plan: the promotion of a Eurafrikan whole, to which Europe would bring its capital and its technique and thus enable the African continent to become an essential factor in world politics.

32. He wondered what would remain of the prospects offered by that plan to Algeria if it were to become a foreign land pledged to fanaticism and, by its very poverty, open to communism. On the other hand, Algeria would benefit greatly by participation in Eurafrikan. Most nations must enter into partnerships, co-operate with each other, or give themselves up to the worst form of ideological or economic bondage.

33. In conclusion, he repeated that the Algerian problem was an internal problem of France, in which the General Assembly of the United Nations should not interfere. His delegation recognized the right of the First Committee to be informed, but at the same time it asked the Committee to recognize France's rights by not adopting a draft resolution which would be contrary to the principles of the Charter.

34. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria) said that he had enjoyed the statement of the representative of France not only because of its eloquence, but also because it would enable him in turn to elucidate some of the views it had expressed and to draw attention to many points which it had omitted. He wished now to state the stern realities of the Algerian situation and the stubborn facts which the French representative had avoided mentioning. For the sake of objectivity, he would rely in his statement primarily on official French documents, reports and authoritative statements.

35. The first aspect he wished to dwell upon was the international character of the Algerian problem, which was of significance in the perspective of current world affairs. It was an aspect which interested, not only the French and the Arabs, but all the nations of the world.

36. One hundred and twenty-five years earlier, France had invaded Algeria, deprived the Algerians of their independence, and declared Algeria a French possession. The Algerian problem thus created had remained with France ever since, just as the Polish and Irish problems had endured with those who had committed aggression to partition Poland and invade Ireland. Yet the French invasion of Algeria had served as a foundation for the French claim to keep the ever-existing Algerian problem away from the concern of the world community. Indeed, it had served as a basis for the legalistic fiction that Algeria was France and Algerians were Frenchmen, thus keeping the problem out of the international field. The problem had now again been internationalized when the United Nations was called upon to assume

full competence and responsibility in helping to solve it. The rule of international law was to govern the Algerian question rather than the unilateral and legalistic formulae or fictions that had been made by France to serve French purposes alone. Indeed, the help of the United Nations in solving the problem was necessary and inevitable, both for the Algerians and for the French.

37. The internationalization of the Algerian question was the result of a general revolution in international affairs and of the actions of the Algerian liberation movement, which had now rendered the French position in Algeria practically untenable.

38. During the previous decade, 700 million people in Asia and Africa had emerged from the status of colonial domination by Western Powers to the status of national liberation and the exercise of their national sovereignty. The sole effect of the civilizing mission of the Western world in the colonial era had been to turn countries of ancient civilization and culture into under-developed regions of the world. Colonialism had been a retrogression in world development inasmuch as it had suppressed the growth of the colonized peoples politically, economically and otherwise. They had, however, survived to become liberated. Algeria was now following the same path of evolution towards national liberty and growth. The tide of national liberation was now striking the Algerian shores of North Africa. With liberation the vast potentialities of Asia and Africa were rapidly turning into active national capabilities. Arab and Asian countries were assuming and discharging their international responsibilities in the United Nations and elsewhere. The fifteen nations which had jointly brought the Algerian question before the General Assembly (A/3197) had shown that Asia and Africa were backing Algerian liberation and independence. Algeria enjoyed the support of the vast majority of mankind as it faced France.

39. The Algerian problem had been an international question long before it came to the United Nations. Thus the United Nations had taken up an already internationalized problem, of the same nature as some other questions of colonialism and liberation.

40. The voice of Asia and Africa had been hardly audible in the United Nations several years ago. Colonial powers such as France still continued to think of Asia and Africa in terms of geographical regions and strategic areas rather than of peoples with aspirations and a will to survive and to grow. However, the voice of Asia and Africa, representing more than half of the human race, had spoken at the African-Asian Conference, held at Bandung in 1955. The declaration the Conference had made with respect to Algeria had its value for those who really appreciated the decent opinion of mankind.

41. Colonial Powers had often reiterated that colonialism was a thing of the past and that it was no longer an actual issue. In his statement the representative of France had described colonialism as a means to bring pacification and development to Algeria. Colonialism was by no means dead; that fact was shown by the presence of the questions of Algeria, Cyprus and West Irian on the agenda of the Committee.

42. Colonialism continued to manifest itself in various forms today. One of them was sheer foreign domination, as in the case of Algeria. Another was the policy of the colonial Powers and their supporters to perpetuate the division of the Arab nation into a multiplicity of States, territories and spheres of influence in order to serve the purposes of colonialism and the colonial-Zionist front.

Still another was the aggravation of grievances within some Arab countries by weaving a pattern of local sectarian and foreign interests, a pattern designed to serve foreign influence to the detriment of national interests. Finally, there was a new Western policy of undue and uncalled-for leadership and interference in the affairs of the area, ostensibly to protect the Middle East against aggression. But a good part of that protection was the protection of foreign and non-Middle Eastern interests and an effort to impose on the countries of the Middle East a foreign line of policy rather than a policy of true co-operation. The peoples of the Middle East, however, were sufficiently matured by age and experience to see through the new doctrines. They opposed colonialism in all its forms, because they recognized it as a malady from which both colonizers and those colonized suffered.

43. Turning to French colonialism in particular, he asserted that it was depleting France's spiritual and material resources. France was spending \$3 million a day in Algeria. Its colonial policy had caused grave dissension and instability within France and had reduced the international reputation of France to its lowest ebb in modern times.

44. The situation in Algeria brought economic profit primarily to some privileged French individuals who had concessions and interests in Algeria rather than to the French nation. France itself continued to pay the cost of colonialism in blood, treasure and reputation. Like the United Kingdom, France clung to the so-called glory of colonialism in the mistaken belief that it was principally because of their colonies that they were considered great Powers.

45. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also had an interest in Algeria which was based on the fear that if Algeria were left to the Algerians an alleged vacuum of power would be created. That theory was devoid of foundation and served no purpose beyond that of power politics. Any power vacuum in Algeria would be filled by the Algerians themselves, not from outside. The real power vacuum was being created in France and in Europe by the great number of French troops transferred to Algeria to fight liberty, making the so-called free world go in search of liberty in its own midst. French and NATO armaments were being used to destroy a people whose only crime was to strive for freedom. In reality, arms could make peace for the dead, but not for the living. The current of national liberation was the mounting current of history. France would be well advised not to swim against that current, for it would never reach shore.

46. Imperialism was by no means ended, but only in desperate retreat. It appeared prepared through alliances, unilateral action and support of aggression to plunge the whole world into another war. In fact, Algeria had been the basic factor in bringing French troops to Cyprus to join with the British and the Zionists in attacking Egypt. The principal purpose of the attack on Egypt had been to stem the tide of Arab liberation, whether in Algeria, Egypt, Syria or elsewhere. As long as colonialism aimed at power there could be no peace in the world.

47. Colonialism was a malady which endangered the very existence of the colonized peoples, who were making enormous sacrifices in their struggle for freedom. The same malady of colonialism also attacked the very principles of the Charter concerning the equality of nations and the right to self-determination. If those principles were not preserved intact, the very future of the world community would be threatened. The Alge-

rian problem was already causing such friction that some of its aspects were before the Security Council.

48. The opposition to colonialism in all its forms was based on concern for the world community and on the desire to assure the future of the suppressed peoples; it stemmed also from the duty under the United Nations Charter to secure friendship and co-operation among the peoples of the world.

49. The Algerians knew that their salvation depended upon their own efforts. Independence was always taken by a people; it was never granted. The Algerians were struggling for national liberty as many other peoples had done in the past.

50. The United Nations, however, had been instituted as a means of facilitating the orderly evolution of dependent peoples towards independence. The greatest practical value of the Organization was to save both the colonizing and the colonized peoples from bloodshed, which in the past had always accompanied struggles for independence.

51. The question now was whether the United Nations would really seek an answer to the Algerian problem or whether it was disposed only to discuss it without finding a solution. The Syrian delegation believed that the Organization was in duty bound to act effectively. It hoped that principles rather than power politics and "cold war" alliances would guide the Committee's deliberations.

52. Syria, an Arab country, was legitimately and gravely concerned with the Algerian question, because Algeria, too, was an Arab country. Arab lands might be numerous and far flung, but the Arab nation was one and the same. Legalistic fictions that Algerians were Frenchmen were totally unacceptable. Nor would the use of force make France other than French, Syria Syrian or Algeria Algerian. It was time that the French learned to like and to coexist with the Arabs who sought to do the same, provided that coexistence was taken in the sense of real friendship and mutual respect.

53. He proposed to treat the Algerian question under six major headings: (1) the status of Algeria and of France in Algeria; (2) the result of French policies on conditions in Algeria; (3) the French residents in Algeria; (4) the Algerian liberation movement; (5) the way in which the Algerian problem might be solved; and (6) the action which the United Nations should take.

54. With regard to the status of France in Algeria and the past and present status of Algeria, he appealed to his listeners in the Committee to recall similar episodes in the history of their own peoples in order to comprehend sympathetically the Algerian question. As other nations had done in the past, the Arabs merely sought the union of their nation in order to determine its future, and enable it to exercise its full rights to self-determination and so to eliminate the weakness and the backwardness which resulted from dismemberment. The Algerian case was unique only by reason of the repressive measures taken against the people of Algeria.

55. In 1830 French forces had suddenly invaded Algeria. The Algerian people, however, had resisted for eighteen years, until 1848. Indeed, the French occupation of Algeria was completed only in 1910. The Algerians had been capable of patience, but not of submission. Today a great part of Algeria had been liberated. Algeria was upholding its honour by its own blood and realizing its freedom by its own sacrifices.

56. He asked what the status of Algeria was, and what it implied — whether its status was that of a colony, a

protectorate, a Trust Territory, a part of France or a member of the French Union. The status of France in Algeria was indeed a puzzle. There were, in fact, two related questions. First, there was the question of France's status in Algeria: by virtue of what right but that of conquest did France claim to exercise sovereignty over Algeria. The second and more important question was that of the present status of Algeria itself. The first question was the difficult one for France to answer, and that difficulty was reflected in the second question.

57. Until the French invasion, Algeria had been a national and political entity possessing all the attributes of sovereignty and governed by a king called the Dey. As a corollary to its statehood, Algeria had entered into a number of international treaties with several countries including the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The first treaty with the United Kingdom dated back to 1683. Algeria was among the first Powers to recognize the United States and had entered into treaty relations with it in 1795. Algeria had been a friend to the United States and a friend in need.

58. The economic importance of Algeria, its naval power at the time, and its geographical position had necessitated the wide international relations which Algeria had entertained. In the face of those facts, it was surprising to hear the representative of France say that Algeria had been a kind of "no man's land" to be occupied, a territory devoid of constituted authority, a country without a past prior to the French invasion. His excuse had been manufactured later to justify French occupation. The fact was, however, that the Algerians now constituted a nationally conscious people, capable of successful resistance to a modern army of 500,000 men, conscious of its past and aware of its future as a State Member of the United Nations.

59. In that connexion, he stressed the contributions which Algeria, as part of the Arab world, had made to the Western world in philosophy, medicine and the arts. To assert that Algeria was a nation without a past was a falsification of history. Coming from the French, such assertions constituted a kind of ingratitude in view of North African contributions to the French Renaissance and French culture.

60. Under Moslem law, the Dey of Algiers could not alienate his sovereignty. A reading of the act of surrender of the Dey to France of 5 July 1830 itself proved that there had been no transfer of sovereignty to France. The act of surrender had not established a protectorate; it had been purely military and non-political inasmuch as it had surrendered only the city of Algiers and its immediate surroundings rather than Algeria as a whole. Not until 1910 had the entire country been occupied. Even that occupation had been only temporary, since most of Algeria at present was unoccupied. History had hardly recorded any more determined and long-drawn out resistance to occupation and domination than that which the armies of France had had to meet in Algeria.

61. At no time and in no way had rights of sovereignty over Algeria been transferred to France. The status of France continued to be that of an occupier exercising power in Algeria by virtue of invasion and conquest. The case of Algeria differed from those of Morocco and Tunisia, where a semblance of legality for French occupation had been established, although with undue interference. In Algeria, France had not acquired even a similar semblance of right. Algeria's case against France was even clearer than the cases of Tunisia and Morocco.

62. Algerian sovereignty therefore continued. French authority in Algeria had no political foundation. The United Nations therefore was free to deal with the Algerian problem in accordance with the Charter. France, unable to justify its authority except on the basis of conquest, had remained constantly perplexed in its unilateral efforts to define the nature and basis of its status in Algeria, as could be seen from the relevant French legal acts.

63. Citing some of those acts, he contended that they showed the great contradictions in the successive positions taken by France on the subject of its status in Algeria. Those contradictions had been further aggravated by the present French Constitution. France had promulgated its Constitution without having consulted the Algerian people. The membership of Algeria in the French Union was an enforced membership. He asked why France had not asked the Algerians to express their will on that matter through a plebiscite. Moreover, had the French Constitution been based upon equality of rights and duties as it had pretended to be, surely Algeria would be able, just as France, to end the state of union. The so-called union was virtually meaningless, since it was full of contradictions.

64. Though French acts declared Algeria part of France, France had never integrated Algeria into France or even in to the French legal system. French laws applicable in France did not generally apply to the Algerians in matters of finance, taxation, customs, hygiene, education and social services. Had Algeria been really integrated, Algerians would have been able to share in the rule of France, and then the privileges of French individuals in Algeria who now exploited the country would have lost their legal basis. Most important of all, however, was that France had never been able to make the Algerians willing subjects of France.

65. The French Prime Minister, in his declaration of policy of 9 January 1957 concerning Algeria, had repeated in substance all previous French claims and legal fictions with respect to Algeria. Both that declaration and the statement made at the present and previous meetings by Mr. Pineau, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, showed that France had forgotten nothing and had learned nothing from the Algerian experience.

66. To sum up, he stated that the following facts were basic to the question of status:

(1) Algeria had enjoyed full statehood before the French occupation; it had enjoyed the right of full sovereignty, as well as the exercise of that right. To that extent, the Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian questions were almost identical.

(2) In the case of Algeria there had been no transfer of the right of sovereignty to France. France had constantly acted unilaterally — in invading Algeria,

suppressing its independence, and denying the Algerians the possibility of exercising their inherent right of sovereignty.

(3) Algeria had not been integrated into France either in fact or in law, nor had Algerians become French citizens on the same footing as other citizens. The French Union, according to the present French Constitution, was neither an integration, nor a union. The situation was that of one country trying to colonize another.

(4) The status of France in Algeria was based solely upon conquest and upon unilateral and contradictory legalistic fictions which France used to allay its perplexities concerning its status in Algeria.

(5) Algeria was neither a colony nor a Trust Territory nor a part of France nor a territory under international mandate nor a protectorate nor really a member of a union. At present France had ceased to occupy or to govern most of Algeria. The right of the Algerian people to self-determination was inalienable and it was accorded to them, as to any other people, in the United Nations Charter.

(6) Algeria had remained an entity, and the Algerian people had remained conscious of their national existence.

67. He asserted that France must agree that the right of sovereignty should be transferred gradually and with the help of the United Nations to the Algerian people, who could decide when independent, if they so desired, to enter freely into relationships with France based upon international co-operation.

68. The French status in Algeria was supported by force, not only on the part of France, but on the part of various international quarters as well.

69. He recalled that France had preferred to turn its back on the General Assembly when the United Nations had taken up the questions of Tunisia and Morocco at the tenth session. He was happy to see France present now, but unhappy indeed to hear the French delegation declare that the United Nations had nothing to do with the Algerian problem; that France wished to deal with Algeria unilaterally and to impose upon it a kind of solution which was satisfactory only to France. That attitude was an affront to the United Nations.

70. He recalled that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had travelled to many capitals of the world to discuss the Algerian problem. Consequently, he wondered how could it be claimed that the Algerian problem was not an international one. He wished to see France change its attitude of the past several years and adopt another conducive to peaceful negotiation, through the good offices of the United Nations, in order to find a just and peaceful solution to the Algerian problem.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.